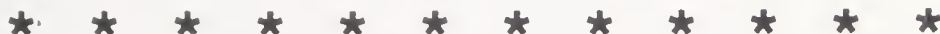


THE IOWA COLLECTOR



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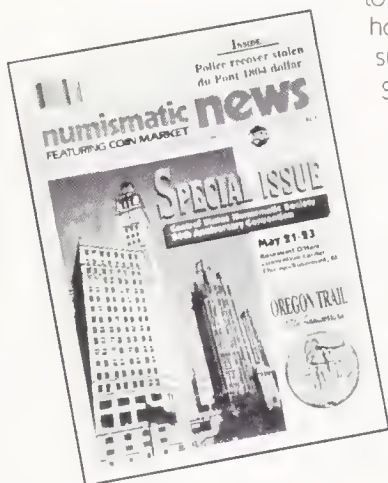
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A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT:

Well, another I.N.A. show is history! Congratulations for a job well done go to Show Chairman, Don Watts, and to Bourse Chairman Don Mark, and to the committees who worked with them. We had a good turnout at the show, both of dealers and collectors. Our meetings were well attended, too.

I would like to see some exhibits on display next time. Members, won't you try to get an exhibit ready for our 1994 show? Not only will you be sharing what you know with other collectors, but very often other collectors in your area of interest will stop by your exhibit to share what they know with you. Everybody benefits from this!

Also, we need to get an invitation from a club that's willing to help bring our show to its area in 1995. It is not too early to start planning for the show that's nearly two years away. Sometimes it takes this much lead time just to reserve facilities.

Right now the 1994 show is tentatively set for Sioux City. We have a new club here, and its members all seem to be energetic, with lots of enthusiasm.

Dean Peterson

President

The Iowa Numismatic Association

* * * * *

FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK:

How great it was to visit with you at the state convention! Ankeny was a great place to have a show, and, although we had fewer dealers than in some years, the quality of those dealers we did have, and the material they had on display, was all quite high. The program of activities was really good, too.

I was able to sit in on the token collectors' breakfast on Saturday morning. Considering how many tokens there are, and the many purposes they can serve, I was impressed by how often someone would know the answer to just about any question someone else would ask. Or, if no one knew the answer directly, someone would at least be able to tell the person asking the question what source (i.e., person or book) might know that answer.

As I've mentioned, the quality of the dealers was superior, with a terrific variety of material available: everything from correctly graded coins to tokens to postcards to bullion to jewelry to paper money to ancients could be found on the bourse floor, typically from several dealers, all of whom were knowledgeable and courteous. And while I didn't see anything to add to my collection of love tokens (the one where the nose coin is a Stella still eludes me...), I did see a set of medals featuring the life of Christ that was issued by the Danbury Mint. It was simply beautiful, both artistically and technically very pleasing.

I was sorry to have missed Tom Gardner's speech at the Saturday afternoon seminar (those who did hear it, tell me it was great!) and the token auction that followed, but I needed to be at the Lakeside Center to take dues from new and renewing members. Some members prefer paying their dues in person, and it does save the I.N.A. a bit in postage. Besides, I did get to preview the material in the token auction at the token collectors' breakfast.

Our Sunday morning breakfast (and Annual Meeting), presided over by Dean Peterson, filled our hospitality room at the Best Western Motel. Dean thanked the committees, and especially Don Watts, Don Mark and Chris Seuntjens, for a well put together show. He also thanked the Keokuk Coin club and Tom Gardner for the improvements in the Iowa Collector. The I.N.A.'s directors voted to go to two Collectors each year, in February and in August, in order to maintain this improved quality. An I.N.A. Newsletter will supplement these two issues as needed--and to be sure we are fulfilling the requirements of our by-laws and articles of incorporation.

Several other matters were brought up at our annual meeting, including how to get the A.N.A.'s two minute radio programs on numismatics on the air at more local Iowa radio stations, how local clubs might follow up on the A.N.A.'s next National Coin Week in April of 1994, and what we all can do to encourage younger members to share in the fun and excitement of our hobbies. There were a lot of suggestions and ideas brought up, more than I have space for here.

The I.N.A. Show is put on in a different location each year, so that all of our members will be able to attend some shows without a major problem in travel. Every other year it is held in the center of the state. The alternating years it's organized in coordination with a member club that might be located in any part of the state. Sioux City is tentatively set to be the site of our 1994 show, and you can look for Cedar Rapids or Fort Dodge to host shows in the near future.

The improved quality of our Iowa Collector will require the cooperation of all of us if it is to be maintained. First, we need more advertisers to help defray the cost of printing and postage. If you are a dealer of any size, please consider running an ad that will put you name before our members and help us pay for our Collector. Send your ad requirements (and checks!) to me by January 1st, as our first bulletin for 1994 will be coming out before the COIN-A-RAMA show in Nevada March 5th and 6th.

Second, please consider contributing to the Collector. Short articles covering any aspect of collecting would be especially welcome, but simply letters to the editor or a paragraph or two on what your club is doing, what's happening at its meetings or how your club attracts new members will all be gladly published--and of interest to our readers throughout the state of Iowa and beyond.

Lets all work together to help our clubs and the Iowa Numismatic Association to be the best!

Numismatically yours,

JoAnn Peters

***** SHOW CALENDAR *****

- March 5-6 COIN-A-RAMA Coin, Stamp and Postcard Show Gates Memorial Hall, 825 Fifteenth Street, Nevada, Iowa.
- March 13 Cedar Rapids Coin Club. Annual Show. Sheraton Inn, 525 33rd Avenue, SW, Cedar Rapids, IA Bourse: Nevin Roberts.
- April 7-10 Central States Numismatic Society. Spring Show. Indianapolis, IN
- April 10 Quad City Coin Club. Spring Show. Holiday Inn, Middle Road & I-74, Bettendorf, IA. Bourse: P.O. Box 332, Moline, IL 61266
- April 16-17 Oskaloosa-Southern Iowa Coin Club. Coin, Stamp, Comic Book & Sports Card Show. Penn Central Mall, 200 High Avenue West, Oskaloosa, IA. Bourse: Gail McKee.
- April 23-24 Keokuk Coin Club. Annual Spring Show. Keosippi Mall, Keokuk, IA. Bourse: Tom Gardner.
- May 22 Waterloo-Cedar Falls Coin Club. Spring Show. Waterloo Recreation Center, West First & Commercial Streets, Waterloo, IA. Bourse: Marvin Rothmeyer.

REMINDER: If your coin club is preparing to schedule a coin show, please contact the I.N.A. Show Coordinator prior to scheduling the event to avoid scheduling conflicts and to provide information for inclusion in the SHOW CALENDAR. The I.N.A. Show Coordinator is Roger Wolver, 309 North 11th Street, Oskaloosa, IA 52577. Telephone: (515) 673 6677 or (515) 673-6633.

When and Where Iowa's Coin Club's Meet:

- Ames - Last Wednesday of the month, Senior Citizens Center, starting at 7:30 p.m.
- Burlington - Last Tuesday, Buescher Hall, 611 Columbia St., 7:30 p.m.
- Cedar Falls - Last Thursday, Cedar Falls Utility Bldg., 7:30 p.m.
- Cedar Rapids - Third Wednesday (except July), KUBA Community Center, 1300 13th Avenue SE, 7:30 p.m.

Central Iowa - (Marshalltown)	Third Wednesday, The Fisher Community Center, 7:30 p.m.
Clarion -	Third Wednesday, I.P.S. Community Meeting Room, 7:30 p.m.
Davenport -	First Tuesday, Davenport Public Library, Fourth & Main Streets, 7:00 p.m.
Decorah -	First Tuesday, Army Reserve Center, 7:30 p.m.
Des Moines -	First Tuesday, Easter Seal Center, 2920 Thirtieth Street, 7:30 p.m.
Forest City -	Second Tuesday, Manufacturers Bank and Trust, 8:00 p.m.
Fort Dodge -	Second Thursday, Airport Meeting Room, 7:30 p.m.
Fort Madison -	Third Tuesday, Midwest Savings & Loan Drive-in, 4520 Avenue L, 7:30 p.m.
ILLOWA - (Clinton)	Third Thursday, Gateway State Bank, Clinton, 7:30 p.m.
Independence -	Third Saturday, Courthouse Basement, 7:30 p.m.
Iris City - (Mt. Pleasant)	First Thursday, Senior Citizens' Center, 7:30 p.m.
Keokuk -	Fourth Thursday (a week earlier in Nov. and Dec.), Keokuk Sr. High School Library (summers at SCC's South Campus Student Lounge), 7:30 p.m.
Old Capital - (Iowa City)	Second Tuesday, West High School, Room 13, 7:30 p.m.
Oskaloosa -	Second Tuesday, Basement of Farm Bureau Bldg., 7:30 p.m.
Ottumwa -	Fourth Tuesday, Colormaster, Inc., 800 Gateway Drive, 7:30 p.m.
Port City - (Muscatine)	Fourth Tuesday, Holiday Inn, Muscatine. Hwys. 61 & 38, 7:30 p.m.
Quad City - (Moline, IL)	Third Thursday, Moline Township Hall, 420 Eighteenth St., 7:30 p.m.

- Red Oak -** First Monday, Farmers Mercantile Bldg., Old Hwy. 34,
7:00 p.m.
- Storm Lake -** Third Thursday, IPS Meeting Room. Winters at 7:30 p.m.; summers
at 8:00 p.m.
- Wadena -** Third Thursday, Historical Center, West Union, 8:00 p.m.
- Waterloo -** Second Thursday, Waterloo Arts & Recreation Center, First and
Commercial Streets, 7:00 p.m.

* * * * *

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor:

Through an oversight, the last paragraph of my article on billiard supplier tokens (in Vol. 28, No. 2) was omitted. Belatedly, I would now like to acknowledge the help I received from George Hosek in publishing my checklist in his 1992 Iowa Town Rarity Guide and from Hank Thoele, whose ongoing research on billiard supplier tokens is being published in the ATCO bulletin. Hank's series of articles has helped to connect various Brunswick reverses with specific regions and periods of time.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who gave me any input on this list and to ask for your continued cooperation in identifying and attributing all billiard supplier tokens, to include the Brunswicks as well as tokens with a stock reverse from Kuehl, National, Pick--or any other old St. Louis makers you may know of.

In any event, I'm sorry that my acknowledgements and thanks were omitted from my article. I want to assure everyone that this oversight was unintentional.

Sincerely,

Jack Glass

* * * * *

THE I.N.A.'s FALL SHOW REMEMBERED

The Iowa Numismatic Association's Fall 1993 Show, October 30-31, took place in two Ankeny locations, the Best Western's Starlight Inn for most meetings and two breakfasts, and the Lakeside Center, which was where the bourse was located. This separation may have resulted in a smaller number of participants at some of the events held in the motel, but it did not appear to dampen the enthusiasm of those who did attend these meetings. The token collectors breakfast on Saturday morning was essentially a gathering of old friends. This group of token enthusiasts have been meeting every few months for several years now, led , as usual, by Milton Heitman.



Participants at this token breakfast reluctantly agreed to pose for one quick photo, just as they were about to leave for the bourse. From left to right, they are Don Watts, Don Mark, JoAnn Peters, Milton Heitman, Jack Glass, Matthew Hansen, Tom Gardner and Henry Hansen.

At the Lakeside Center, the I.N.A.'s secretary/treasurer, JoAnn Peters, greeted arrivals to the bourse floor, made sure memberships were up to date and worked at all the records her office requires her to keep. Meanwhile, just across the entrance from JoAnn, the I.N.A.'s president, Dean Peterson, had a ready smile and cheerful greeting for those passing his table.



Dean was not the only I.N.A. officer or director who was a dealer at the show. First Vice President Roger Wolver was set up, as was District V Director Don Mark.



Also, George Shook (left photo) and Clarence McKee (center photo) both had tables . . . as did Bill Bagwell (right photo), representing Dean Oaks.



IOWA'S PALACES

A Speech Given at the
Iowa Numismatic Association's
Fall 1993 Convention at Ankeny, Iowa

by Tom Gardner

Palaces built from or devoted to a local commodity started springing up like mushrooms in the late 1880's. To the north, Saint Paul, Minnesota, had a succession of ice palaces, while to the west, Leadville, Colorado, had at least one ice palace, too. In Nebraska, Grand Island had a sugar beet palace. Further south, Waco, Texas, had a cotton palace. Over in Illinois, the small town of Momence had a hay palace. But in the construction of exotic palaces of this type, Iowa leads the nation, with at least four, most of which reappeared for more than one year. Three of these four palaces I want to tell you about today: the Corn Palace in Sioux City, the Blue Grass Palace in Creston and the Coal Palace in Ottumwa. The fourth palace is the Flax Palace in Forest City. I am not including it today because, so far as I know, no tokens of medals depicting it or mentioning it were ever issued. In fact, the only collectible that I know of featuring the Flax Palace is a sterling silver souvenir spoon.

Of course, there may have been even more Iowa palaces. I have heard that Algona might have built a hay palace, that Pella at least talked of building a Wooden Shoe Palace and that Davenport planned but did not build a Onion Palace. Should any of you know of any other actual or even planned palaces, I'd very much like to add them to my list.

When I first became interested in Iowa's palaces, three questions occurred to me. These three questions have guided my subsequent research. They are. . .

- (1) Why were these palaces built?
- (2) What were they like?
- and (3) What tokens, medals and other memorabilia from these palaces have survived?

Unfortunately, I don't have a complete answer to any one of these questions. Indeed, these are the kinds of questions no one can answer completely. But let me share with you now what I have learned so far.

Iowa's palaces were all built because of something in the air, a spirit of the times, a shared imagination. Furthermore, Iowa's palaces were built because specific, individual citizens in their respective communities wanted them built--in many cases wanted them built badly enough to make considerable sacrifices of time and money to see that they were built.

Whatever it was in the air that encouraged the building of "palace" exhibition halls, it had been around for at least a generation. The first such palace was London's Crystal Palace, built in 1851. It was followed in 1853 by New York's Crystal Palace, which was destroyed by fire five years later.

The Civil War postponed any thoughts of additional palaces in the United States. Although the postwar years featured a number of local and regional exhibitions, I don't believe any were identified specifically as palaces. Exhibition halls at the 1876 Centennial Exposition were referred to as palaces, though, so the idea of making a "palace" out of a local commodity and then naming it for that commodity would not have taken a very great leap of imagination.

THE CORN PALACES

In Iowa this leap was first made in 1887, when a group of Sioux City's prominent businessmen gathered together to decide how best to celebrate the region's good fortune in harvesting a bounteous crop during a year when much of the nation had suffered a drought. Furthermore, Sioux City had enjoyed great prosperity in the preceding six or seven years, having grown in population from seven thousand to thirty thousand inhabitants.

Several ideas were considered and rejected, and then one Sioux City booster, his name now lost to history, suggested a corn palace. This idea was accepted by acclamation and then adopted with enthusiasm by all of Sioux City and the surrounding area. Further meetings were held, at which poems both old and new, written in praise of corn, were recited to appreciative audiences. Ladies wore strings of corn beads as necklaces, while gentlemen wore corn husk cravats. Schoolchildren were set to memorizing passages from Longfellow's "Mondamin," which concerns an Indian god of corn, and learned all about Ceres, the Roman goddess of grain from whom we get our word "cereal."

Meanwhile, the original plan to spend five thousand dollars on a corn festival was updated with an estimated cost of twenty-five thousand dollars. Within a month a Sioux City Corn Palace Exposition Company was incorporated with a capital stock of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. E.W. Lott designed a palace that was to occupy ten thousand square feet, a figure that was later doubled by extending the structure to connect with the Sioux City Armory.

The first Sioux City Corn Palace was officially opened on the evening of October 3, 1887. Its architecture has been described as Moorish, although its square towers, battlements, enormous arched entrances and intricate designs in various colored grains and grasses must surely place it beyond such feeble comparisons. The central roof was topped by a cupola which was, in turn, surmounted by a spire that rose to a height of one hundred feet. Flying buttresses connected the central cupola with towers at each corner, giving the entire structure a lacy, filigreed appearance, despite its great size.

Within the palace, a large auditorium occupied the central area beneath the cupola. The auditorium's walls were fantastically decorated, using exclusively the

products of local agriculture. One wall features a map of all the states and territories, each in a different color. Another wall was dominated by a figure of Ceres all dressed in corn husks and carrying a corn stalk scepter. She stood at the top of a golden stairway of corn. In a corner there lurked a large spider fashioned from carrots, its web made from corn silks.

A full week of street parades, speeches by local dignitaries, fireworks displays and band concerts followed the grand opening. People streamed in from miles around, the nearer ones by buggy or wagon, the more remote arriving by train. The all slept with friends and relatives, in rooms to let, or at campgrounds in the manner of G.A.R. encampments. Hotel rooms were at a great premium.

Finally, at the end of the week several important guests from the East made appearances. Most notable among them were the wealthy capitalists Cornelius Vanderbilt and Chauncey Depew. Early the next day Grover Cleveland, the President of the United States, arrived in his special railway car. All three men were highly complimentary of this outpouring of local civic pride. President Cleveland returned to his railway car with an ear of corn sticking out of one pocket and the words, "This is the first new thing I've seen on my entire trip" on his lips.

Sioux City's boosters took great pride in the success of their Corn Palace and resolved to build an even larger one the next year. Indeed, the 1888 Corn Palace occupied a full quarter of a city block and used thirty thousand bushels of corn, each ear split lengthwise and the halves nailed to an underlying structure of wood. Each of the booths that surrounded a central auditorium was itself an elaborate decorative display of local produce. One represented a Grecian temple, another an ice cave, and yet a third a barnyard scene. All of these booths were surmounted by a promenade that was decorated with bands of golden rod and millet. Governor Larrabee declared this second Corn Palace to be a fairyland.

The third Corn Palace, which opened September 23, 1889, was distinguished by the number and variety of excursion parties that came to visit it. Several hundred Indians came from their reservations to dance and feast and march in daily parades. There were excursion groups from a large number of midwestern cities, including a sizeable delegation from Creston, representing the Blue Grass League, which was planning its own palace. A hundred wealthy capitalists from Boston, who came as the guests of a local entrepreneur named A.S. Garretson, were continually reminded that Sioux City had many possibilities that needed only investment to be realized. A new invention, the phonograph, featured prominently at this palace, much to the consternation of the musicians in the marching bands.

Sioux City's Corn Palaces continued to grow in size year by year. This 1889 palace featured a central tower over one hundred and eighty feet high that had surrounding balconies at four different levels. The west end of the palace now crossed Pierce Street by means of a great arch, so that traffic remained unimpeded.

The 1890 Corn Palace was perhaps a bit of a letdown. The weather was certainly less cooperative, raining the entire final day, when a grand parade had been scheduled which was to be followed by a reception of honored guests. The palace roof leaked, and most of the honored guests never arrived.

This fourth palace was designed as a "Mohammedan mosque with Iowa trimming." The central dome that dominated the structure was also a hugh globe of the world oriented so that Iowa (and especially Sioux City) was directly above the main entrance. There was a minaret on top of this dome and six more towers at the palace's perimeter.



The fifth and final Sioux City Corn Palace was built in 1891. More than a block long, it was the largest of them all. Its central dome, over two hundred feet high, gave it something of the appearance of the capitol building in Washington. It, too, had a great arch over Pierce Street, lots of balcony space for viewing the city, plus an assortment of towers and minarets. It was also highly colorful, with purple, red, orange, yellow, green and blue all represented--typically by means of grains and grasses. One contemporary account, however, insisted that the palace would be best appreciated when seen in silhouette, just at sunset.

An east wing to this fifth palace was occupied by a large auditorium, while the west wing was filled with competitive exhibits of agriculture. The South was well represented this year, with much of this west wing decorated in Spanish moss and brake grass. Several railway companies also offered exhibits, giving this Corn Palace a more national character. The winning exhibit, however, was of a miniature library, complete with furniture and pictures on the wall. Nearly every part of this exhibit was fashioned from local agricultural products, with corn used in a number of clever and colorful ways.

When the fifth Corn Palace closed its doors on October 25, 1891, there were to be no more. Sioux City's economy suffered a decline in the 1890's, with several individuals, businesses and at least one bank failing or declaring bankruptcy. Besides, by 1892 all

efforts at boosting a region's products seemed to be focused on the International Columbian Exhibition being planned for Chicago.

With more annual palaces than any other Iowa community, Sioux City also produced more tokens, medals and charms for its corn palaces. There is not yet a comprehensive catalogue of this series of exnumia, and I am in no position to provide you with one now. Instead, I'd like to indicate the scope of this series in more general terms.

Only one small medal that I know of was issued for the first Corn Palace in 1887. It's a 24 mm. brass piece featuring an image of the palace on one side with the words "CORN PALACE" above and "SIOUX CITY" below. On the other side, this medal reads, "SOUVENIR / OF THE / HARVEST / FESTIVAL / OCT. 1887" in the center, with "IOWA DAKOTA / MINNESOTA NEBRASKA" near the outer rim.

This series gets much more complicated with second palace in 1888. I know of seven different small medals for this year alone, and they come in a variety of different shapes and sizes as well as designs. One silvered piece might more properly be called a charm. It is diamond shaped, 17 mm. on each of its four sides, and features the 1888 Corn Palace on its anepigraphic obverse. It is set in a frame that states on the reverse: "CORN PALACE / *1888* / SIOUX CITY."

Another 1888 piece that is particularly interesting to me is an advertising token that reads "COMPLIMENTS OF / B. DAVIDSON & CO." on its reverse. These words encircle a crowned ear of corn; the obverse has an image of the palace and the words "CORN PALACE SIOUX CITY / SEPT. 24 OCT. 6 / 1888."

The remaining five 1888 pieces that I know of all feature an image of the palace on one side, while the other side offers varying language and images. One has an allegorical female head in profile, most likely representing Ceres, with an ear of corn before and behind her. The ribbon in her hair reads "SIOUX CITY." Another has an Indian in profile with the base of his headdress reading "KING CORN." A third one employs the crowned ear of corn motif and reads "THE EIGHTH WONDER / THE WORLD / CORN IS KING." The remaining two have only inscriptions on their reverses

I only know of four tokens and medals from 1889 but suspect there are more. All have the 1889 Corn Palace on their obverse. On one the reverse has crossed ears of corn and the words "CORN IS KING." Another is anepigraphic, with a full-length figure of Ceres holding a long-handled torch in one hand and an ear of corn in the other. A third one has the words "SOUVENIR / SIOUX CITY / 1889" in a wreath on the reverse--it is unusual because of its size (36 mm.) and composition (white metal). The fourth 1889 medal is actually an advertising token. Its reverse features an ear of corn and the words "W.H. BECK'S SOUVENIR / WE ARE THE PEOPLE."

I have only examined personally one 1890 medal, although it comes in both brass and white metal. It is, in fact, another advertising token for W.H. Beck. Its obverse features the 1890 palace with the words "SIOUX CITY CORN PALACE" above and the year, "1890" below. In the center of the reverse there is a cartouche with two crossed ears of corn behind it and the year "1890" on it. The words surrounding all this read, "W.H. BECK, THE SIOUX CITY / JEWELER."

The final Corn Palace, in 1891, was responsible for at least three medals. Both of the two smaller brass pieces feature the palace on the obverse and the words "SIOUX CITY CORN PALACE" above and the year "1891" below. The reverse of one has "CORN PALACE / SOUVENIR" in a wreath, while the other has the familiar "CORN IS KING" surrounding crossed ears of corn on it. The third 1891 medal is 36 mm. and made from aluminum. It's obverse has "CORN IS KING" above the palace and "SIOUX CITY / CORN PALACE / 1891" below. The reverse uses the crossed ears of corn to separate the following words: "SIOUX CORN PALACE CITY."

It is difficult to determine rarity or value for these pieces. Russell Rulau's United States Trade Tokens 1866-1889 suggests a range from \$5.00 to \$30.00, depending on the specific piece and its condition. If the piece comes with its original ribbon, that would add to its value. I think the advertising pieces are considered more desirable by collectors, too. And, I suspect that the larger pieces, especially when they are in a condition to display the finer detail in their images, also command a premium. In the final analysis, though, there aren't many Sioux City Corn Palace tokens, nor are there that many collectors of them. These factors make luck, circumstance, and what that person bidding against you already owns and wants the real determiners of price.



THE BLUE GRASS PALACES

There were actually three Blue Grass Palaces built at Creston, Iowa, although only the first, in 1889, is depicted on a small medal. All were the product of a Blue Grass League formed in May of 1889 for the purpose of "... advertising to the world the

unexcelled advantages of the blue grass region of southwestern Iowa as a place for permanent home building and the bringing to the notice of intending immigrants of older states the superiority of soil, climate water and natural resources and productions of the territory named." On May 11, 1889 the League decided that the best way to accomplish this purpose was by erecting a palace of local grasses and grains.

Louis Syberkrop, a Creston artist and decorator, along with J.C. Woodruff, a local contractor, designed the first blue grass palace. No doubt they learned a lot from those who built the corn palaces. The first corn palace and the first blue grass palace were both the same size, one hundred feet by one hundred feet, and had the same general layout: a central auditorium, or courtyard, with booths surrounding it and a second floor gallery on top of the booths. The central courtyard offered grandstand seating for a succession of speeches, sermons, band concerts and other activities that took place between August 22 and September 7, 1889.

In addition, the first blue grass palace featured a spiral staircase to the top of the palace's central tower and a main entrance through a horseshoe arch built of baled hay, the top of which was a speaker's stand. Baled hay was used to face the rest of this structure as much as possible, with other grains and grasses used to provide decorative motifs and color variations.

A Blue Grass Ladies' League was formed to decorate the interior. One attraction the provided was a large female figure representing Ceres or Demeter, elaborately dressed in robes made of grasses and grains. Other grass-and-grain figures included an old lady spinning, a baby in a cradle beside her, and various articles of furniture. Pictures, maps and other devices adorned the walls. All were formed from local agricultural products.

And for those who tired of looking at the exhibits and displays there were trotting races, advertised as "the fastest in the world." Purses and premiums totalled over \$15,000.

The first Blue Grass Palace, which cost \$20,000 to build, actually made a couple of hundred dollars over the eighteen days it was in use. This encouraged everyone to build even bigger palaces the next year and again in 1891. By this time the Blue Grass League encompassed eighteen counties, and the Blue Grass Palace was the centerpiece of an elaborate regional fair.

The 1890 Blue Grass Palace was three times a big as the preceding year. Its main tower soared to a height of one hundred and twenty feet, with towers to each side ninety feet high. The main entrance also boasted a tower with five open floors. All of these towers were connected by suspension bridges. Surrounding the palace there were all the refreshment booths, shooting galleries, tents, livestock barns and racing stables you would expect to see at a major regional fair, along with milling crowds of thousands of area residents.

The third Blue Grass Palace, in 1891, was just as big, with only minor modifications to the previous year's structure. Probably the most striking feature of this third palace was a huge moveable panorama made up of paintings that depicted scenes from the blue grass region. Some accounts suggest that the Blue Grass Palace was used one more time in 1892, but by this time there was no longer a Blue Grass League, so I

suspect that the structure simply still happened to be there, out at the fair grounds, when Union County held its annual fair.

The one small medal for the Blue Grass Palace can be found in gilt copper (or brass) as well as white metal. It is 25.5 mm. in diameter and has a plain edge. Its obverse features an image of the castle with a tiny "P.L. KRIDER CO. PHILA." in the exergue. the reverse has a bale in its center, with a sheaf of blue grass to each side. Around all this appear the words: "CRESTON BLUE GRASS PALACE, 1889." As the state of origin is not given, this medal is sometimes misattributed to Kentucky or Ohio. It does not appear on the market very often, and when it does, it typically sells for twenty to thirty dollars, depending on condition--and who else is bidding against the buyer.

THE COAL PALACE

The Ottumwa Coal Palace must have been one of the more ambitious palaces featuring a local commodity ever to have been erected in the Midwest. It was built in 1890 and then, after extensive remodeling (if the images on the Coal Palace medals are reliable) used again in 1891. Here's an excerpt from an 1890 opening day newspaper account:

THE PALACE OF JET:

The Beauties Becoming More And More Bewildering

The palace, a kaleidoscope of beauty by day, will be simply bewildering at night, with the many colored electric lights flashing their brilliant or dreamy hues about various nooks in the building. The view outside will be almost as much of a delight, the light giving the muslin windows the effect of cathedral glass, the whole furnishing the well-developed appearance of a feudal castle. It needs only a moat, a bridge, and the dashing of helmeted knights out of the palace into the darkness to make you feel you are on the estate of one of the barons of the medieval ages.

The palace was faced with coal because Ottumwa was then in a significant coal mining region. (Today, however, there are at most only two or three mines operating in this region.) Its interior decorations included not only coal, but corn, oats, wheat, rye, wool, and hemp as well as a large number of articles displaying the domestic talents of the women of southern Iowa. Area industries were also well represented with exhibits. Popular features included the winning team in the Iowa-Illinois Base Ball League done entirely in corn husks, a representation of the goddess Flora made from pumpkin seed, and an interior waterfalls. Beneath the palace was a full-scale reproduction of a coal mine. Visitors were hauled through this mine to an elaborate sunken garden. The natural history exhibit was said to include the largest collection of fossil bones and curios

in the West. This part of the palace was decorated with the antlers of deer, moose, and elk formed into great arches. The entire palace measured 230 by 130 feet and included a main tower 200 feet high.

Entertainments at the Coal Palace included a 150 voice choir and a 60 piece band. Two comic operas were produced, The Mikado and Powhatten. Both featured the waterfalls as a backdrop, which must have added to the spectacle, if not the music. Gilbert and Sullivan's Mikado is still frequently produced, but if contemporary reviews are to be believed, Powhatten has fallen into an undeserved obscurity.

Of course, one of the more popular forms of entertainment was speeches by prominent persons. Not only did people of local prominence speak, the governors of Iowa and Missouri both spoke, as did various judges, congressmen, and senators. On October 9, 1890, President Benjamin Harrison visited the Coal Palace for half a day and spoke to a crowd estimated at 65,000. The fact that his sister was a resident of Ottumwa may have influenced his decision to attend. The following year William McKinley, who was later to become president, spoke to a crowd so large that the Coal Palace grounds could only hold a small part of it, and so the meeting was moved to a nearby city park.

The Coal Palace was only open for about a month in 1890 and again for another month in 1891. (The only other time it was open to the public was in April of 1891, for the funeral of Peter Ballingall, whose idea the Coal Palace was.) Shortly after McKinley's address, the building was razed, having been stripped of its exhibits and the materials sold for what they would bring.



The 1890 Coal Palace medals all share a common obverse. Most of them are actually merchant tokens, with the merchant identified on the reverse. Most are brass, though one has been reported in white metal. They are all 29 mm. in diameter. The obverse features the words "OTTUMWA COAL PALACE" above an image of the palace and the year "1890" below. Some of these medals have a blank reverse, but over a half a dozen merchants placed their firm's name on the reverse, as follows:

CHAS. BACHMAN, JEWELER 210 E. MAIN ST. OTTUMWA, IA.

COMPLIMENTS OF P.G. BALLINGALL, IOWA.

COMPLIMENTS OF J.W. GARNER

COMPLIMENTS OF W.E. LEWIS, CHARITON

COMPLIMENTS OF J.C. MANCHESTER, BALLINGALL HOUSE

COMPLIMENTS OF MOREY & MYERS, CIGAR CO.

COMPLIMENTS OF PALLISTER BROS. HAVANA CIGAR / FACTORY

COMPLIMENTS OF S.M. STANCLIFF, BAKER HOUSE

There are two varieties of the 1891 Coal Palace medal, both of which were manufactured by Childs of Chicago. Both are 36 mm. in diameter and made of bronze. They have identical obverses that read "IOWA COAL PALACE" above the image of the palace and "OTTUMWA, 1891." beneath it. The reverses have almost identical wording on them. One reads "MINERAL AND INDUSTRIAL / EXPOSITION / MAINTAINED BY THE CITIZENS OF OTTUMWA" in an inner area, while an outer circle reads "SECOND SEASON COAL PALACE. OPENED SEPT. 15, CLOSED OCTOBER 10, 1891." The other has the same wording, except an ampersand is used after the word "MINERAL" and the arrangement of the words and style of the lettering is different. This difference is quite apparent to the eye.

* * * * *

It is my hope that this incomplete listing of the medals and tokens from Iowa's palaces will encourage the I.N.A.'s members to look back through their collection to see what can be added to the list. If you have tokens or medals celebrating any of Iowa's palaces that I haven't mentioned, please send a short letter describing them to the Iowa Collector at P.O. Box 172, Keokuk, IA 52632. Or if you're feeling just a bit more ambitious, you might consider a short article. The Keokuk Coin Club's Editorial Committee will be happy to assist you.

THE MERCHANT TOKENS OF JEFFERSON COUNTY

By Jack Glass

One interesting way to collect trade tokens is to collect the tokens issued by the merchants in your area. You might collect just the tokens in your town or city, or do as I have, and try to collect all of the tokens from your county, which in my case is Jefferson County.

Jefferson County has a present population of 14,000 residents, 10,000 of whom live in Fairfield, the county seat. In addition to Fairfield, five other towns that I know of have had merchants that issued tokens at one time or another. The oldest token from Jefferson County that I know of is a saloon token used by A.G. Smith in Lockridge in 1886. This is also the only token that I know was used in Lockridge.

Another one-token town is Packwood, located in the northwest corner of the county. About 1930 Charles Purdy had a barber shop with a pool table in Packwood. And the last of the one-token towns is Abingdon, where C.A. Myers had a grocery store in the teens and twenties.

If you go south from Abingdon about five miles, you'll come to Batavia, which is just inside the Jefferson-Wapello County line. Batavia had at least two merchants who issued tokens. Gust. Nordgren had a general store in Batavia and in Agency, the next town to the west on the railroad. His token is a maverick, which means no town is listed on it (and also means that it took a bit of research with old directories to attribute it to Batavia and Agency). The Batavia Mercantile Company also used tokens in both Agency and Batavia, although its tokens all read Agency.

If you leave Batavia and travel southeast, you will soon come to Libertyville, where several merchants issued tokens at various times during the first half of the twentieth century. The earliest of these tokens was used by a man named Davidson. He had a restaurant in Libertyville about 1906. Back in the early 1930's, a Libertyville barber named Rodibaugh used a token that reads "GOOD FOR A SHAVE." And then, in 1937 (or thereabouts) the Slimmer Bros. issued a token with the message "SHOP IN LIBERTYVILLE," evidently to try and combat the lure of Fairfield's more diverse stores after the state put in a concrete road to Fairfield.

In Fairfield itself, the oldest token I know of was issued by Saur's Bakery, which began in business in 1893. It issued tokens in metal and cardboard, both of which read "GOOD FOR A LOAF OF BREAD." Saur's ran a restaurant in conjunction with the bakery. They were in business until the late 1940's.

Two other bakeries in Fairfield used tokens. O.J. Kellogg had a bakery on the east side of the square about 1906. His token also reads "GOOD FOR A LOAF OF BREAD." H.C. Davis had a grocery and bakery on the west side of the square at about the same time as Kellogg was on the east side, and he issued a full set of token denominations: 5¢, 10¢, 25¢, 50¢ and 1.00, all of which were good for the specified amount "IN TRADE."

Fairfield's White Brothers started out with a huckster wagon, eventually moving into a store on the north side of the square.

They also issued a full set of tokens in five denominations, from 5¢ to 1.00. They used these tokens in buying eggs and produce from their farmer customers. Farmers who would accept the tokens instead of cash were given a 10% bonus, i.e., 11¢ in tokens for every 10¢ worth of butter, eggs, etc. The White "T" Store was in business up into the 1950's, when the sons of the founders finally retired.

The last group of token issuers in Fairfield to consider are the pool hall/billiard parlor owners. The oldest token I've found in this category was issued by Osborne & Aaronson, who had a combination barber shop cigar store pool hall in the early 1920's. It was bought out by Curtiss & Miller, who are rumored to have done some bootlegging out of the back room. In 1943 this place became the Elite Billiard Parlor, which it remained until 1978, when it became a coffee shop/bistro.

In the mid-1920's O.C. Bottger came to Fairfield from Ollie, where he had owned a grocery store. He owned the Mission Billiard Parlor on the southeast corner of the square until 1930, when he sold the billiard parlor to Clyde Free and went into the amusement (i.e., slot) machine business. Free moved the billiard parlor to the north side of the square, where he continued in business until sometime in the early 1950's.

There was also a barber shop pool room on Fourth Street, an area called "New Chicago" for many years. In the 1930's it was run by a barber named Hutton. He used "NEW CHICAGO POOL HALL" tokens, but I am not sure if he was the one who originally issued these tokens or if this was not done by an earlier proprietor.

I know of only two other tokens from Fairfield. One is a token issued in 1939 by John Campbell for use in his tavern. The other was used by the Triangle Auto Supply Company at their stores in Fairfield, Washington and Iowa City, with all three locations spelled out on the token. It is good for \$1.00 in trade on a new tire and tube. I suspect it was used in the 1920's or 1930's.

As you can see, studying tokens from your area can enable you to learn quite a bit of local history and even help to preserve a small part of it. I'm still learning about Jefferson County's merchants and the tokens they've issued. I'd like to ask anyone who can add to my knowledge of this subject to write me. I am not sure that this is a complete list of the tokens used in Jefferson County and would like to know of any others. Thanks!



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Signature of Applicant

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I.N.A. or A.N.A. No.

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Ms. []

Applicant's Name (please print)

Mailing Address

City

State

Zip Code

Date & Year of Birth

Send this application together with \$5.00 for current years dues. Young applicants' dues are \$2.00 per year until age eighteen.

Note: The I.N.A. year runs from January 1st to January 1st.

* * * * *

(Space below for use of Secretary-Treasurer.)

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Any person interested in numismatics, over eighteen years of age and of good moral character may become a member upon recommendation of the membership committee. Dues to be \$5.00 per year.

OBJECT

The object of this corporation shall be to encourage and promote the science of numismatics; to cultivate fraternal relationships among coin collectors and students; to foster the interest of youth in the subject; to encourage and assist new collectors; to stimulate and advance affiliations between our associations and kindred organizations in the United States and foreign countries; to acquire and disseminate numismatic knowledge and, generally, to represent numismatic interests throughout the State of Iowa.

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Officers are elected every two years by membership vote, by mail ballot, and take office at the annual convention following the election. Officers consist of sixteen members, including the president, the first and second vice presidents, the secretary-treasurer, the immediate predecessor of the president and eleven directors.

The annual membership meeting is held each year at the Iowa Numismatic Association's annual convention in the fall.

The Iowa Collector, the official bulletin, is published four times each year and sent to each paid-up member.

The I.N.A., upon request, will help the heirs of any member of good standing find a qualified person or persons, in his or her area, to appraise an estate.

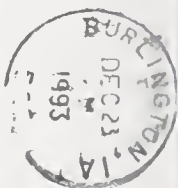
For further information about the I.N.A., contact any member, director or officer in your area.

An application has been enclosed with the issue of The Iowa Collector. To join the I.N.A., fill it in and send it, along with your check, to. . .

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